14: Brant E-5 (1949-50) 1954 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

thinking, being the mother of a son is itself considered the greatest event of a woman's life and represents the achievement of full existence as a female human being. The relationship is close and indulgent. The mother is regarded by her son as more important than his wife; in fact, a son normally will choose a wife with a great deal of regard for his mother's opinions and wishes. 593

Mother and Daughter. The mother is her daughter's early teacher. It is considered most important for the girl to learn prayers, how to prepare the daily food offering, and how to change the flowers on the household altar. These things are taught almost from the time the child begins to speak and understand. Other household duties in which a mother instructs her daughter vary considerably with the economic status of the family. In poor families some assistance with tending animals and winnowing the rice is part of the girl's work from about the age of ten. Daughters are expected to show filial respect and deference equally to the mother and father. 593 868 [565]

Father and Son. The father occupies the role of disciplinarian in the family. Disciplining of sons may include physical punishment, though such measures are not resorted to readily. Prior to adolescence, boys are taught prayers and good habits by their mothers, with the father remaining more or less in the background and interfering only when disciplinary action may be required of him. After a son passes adolescence the father becomes important as his mentor. 593 861

Husband and Wife's Elder Sister. This relationship tends to mirror a conflict between age and sex as status factors in the social structure. There is an implicit conflict between the husband's position as a man and his wife's elder sister's position, in many cases, as his senior, having a claim on outward respect and obedience. In practice this relationship is often cool and aloof in nature, very much in contrast to the free and easy one between a man and his wife's younger sisters. 607 182 602

Husband and Wife's Younger Sister. A man is expected to show great favor to his wife's younger sisters and to display more interest in them than in his own sisters. He buys them presents, gives them spending money when he can, and covertly he is expected to be on the lookout for prospective husbands for them. Quite frequently, the wife's younger sisters will accompany her and her husband when she marries, and all will live together in the same house. Although husband and wife's younger sisters engage in a great deal of mutual joking and teasing, the relationship does not normally assume a sexual aspect. Polygyny is permissable but very rarely practiced; when it is, however, it takes the sororal form. The rather free and easy relationship between a husband and his wife's younger sisters sometimes gives rise to village gossip -- especially when it is known that he and his wife are not getting along well -- that he is carrying on love affairs with his younger sisters-in-law. 607 587

In-Laws. A daughter-in-law is definitely subordinate to her mother-in-law. If they live in the same household, the mother-in-law is entitled to the best room and to be waited upon by her daughter-in-law. Significantly, the Burmese word for daughter-in-law (cwɔ̀mà) means 'sweat woman. 606

The term for son-in-law (ɔ̀mɛ?) means 'desired son.' A son-in-law is a privileged member of his wife's family. His wishes are respected and his comforts looked after. His mother-in-law instructs her younger children to show him respect and deference.

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

a boy who cannot. If there were more nunneries, there would be more education among the women; here is cause and effect. But there are not, so the little girls work instead. While their brothers are in the monasteries, the girls are learning to weave and herd cattle, drawing water, and collecting firewood. They begin very young at this work, but it is very light; they are never overworked, and so it does them no harm usually, but good.

The daughters of better-class people, such as merchants, and clerks, and advocates, do not, of course, work at field labour. They usually learn to read and write at home, and they weave, and many will draw water. For to draw water is to go to the well, and the well is the great meeting-place of the village. As they fill their jars they lean over the curb and talk, and it is here that is told the latest news, the latest flirtation, the little scandal of the place. Very few men or boys come for water; carrying is not their duty, and there is a proper place for flirtation. So the girls have the well almost to themselves.

Almost every girl can weave. In many houses there are looms where the girls weave their dresses and those of their parents; and many girls have stalls in the bazaar. Of this I will speak later. Other duties are the husking of rice and the making of cheroots. Of course, in richer households there will be servants to do all this; but even in them the daughter will frequently weave either for herself or her parents. Almost every girl will do something, if only to pass the time.

They have no accomplishments. They do not

23: Brant & Mi Mi Khaing E, I-5 (1949-1950)1951
AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

philandering husband, on the other hand, will usually do no more than display hurt feelings for a brief period; rarely will she separate from her husband, especially if they have children.

Siblings. It is the duty of the younger to show deference to the elder. This pertains to the order of serving food, fetching and carrying of things, and even the arrangement of sleeping mats or beds—a younger sibling never should sleep with his feet extended toward an elder sibling. Upon the death of a parent, the eldest sibling of the same sex assumes that parent's socio-economic role in the family.

Father–Daughter. Consistent with the age principle, it is a daughter's duty to be obedient and to wait upon her father. Once an unmarried daughter passes the age of puberty, the father is expected to lead a circumspect and moral life more than ever before. Any deviant sexual behavior or drunkenness on his part reflects upon the daughter and detracts from her marital chances.

Mother–Son. Although a son owes obedience to his mother, her claim upon him in this regard is tempered by the fact that in Burmese Buddhist thinking, being the mother of a son is itself considered the greatest event of a woman's life and represents the achievement of full existence as a female human being. The relationship is a close and indulgent one. The mother is regarded as more important by the son than his wife; in fact, a son will choose his wife with a great deal of regard for his mother's opinions and wishes.

Mother–Daughter. The mother is the female child's early teacher. It is considered most important for the daughter to learn prayers, how to prepare the daily food offering for the household altar, and how to change the flowers on the altar. These things are taught almost from the time the child starts learning language. Other household duties in which the mother instructs her daughter vary considerably with the economic status of the family: in poor families some assistance with tending the animals and winnowing the rice crop is part of the girl's work from about the age of ten. Daughters are expected to show filial respect and deference equally to the mother and father.

Father–Son. The father occupies the role of disciplinarian in the family. Disciplining of sons may include physical punishment, though such measures to obtain conformity are not resorted to readily by the Burmese. Prior to adolescence, boys are taught prayers and good habits by their mothers, with the father remaining more or less in the background and interfering only when disciplinary action may be required of him. After a son passes adolescence the father becomes important as his mentor.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

852
[178]
301
854
[562]

[868]

16. THE FIRST STEP.

of an inch thick. This custom is on the decline, and the ears of boys are not so generally pierced as they used to be. The *naddung* or women's ear-plug of gold is being replaced by the *nagát* with its slender stem (No. 241). With eldest-born girls the fête is frequently deferred until they are twelve or fourteen, and is then celebrated with all the more splendour (p. 14).

862
854 Burman children are not weaned until the second or third year. Nevertheless they begin to receive solid food as soon as they will take it. The illusion prevails that the earlier they do so the stronger they will be. It is a [165] chief source of infant sickness and mortality, and of the smallness of the families reared. A curious feature of Burman sociality is the promiscuous suckling of infants in the circle of relatives and friends.

855
858
302 Children's heads are shaved in more or less fanciful ways up to the ages of ten or twelve, after which the hair is allowed to grow long.

858
857
524 The road-fronts of the houses are always peopled with children. Children are equals and are free to roam through the neighbours' houses and plots, where they are kindly noticed. Adults take [854] interest in their games, and make kites and reels, boats, carts and other simple toys for them.

17. THE WOODEN CRADLE (BAUNGBAN).

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

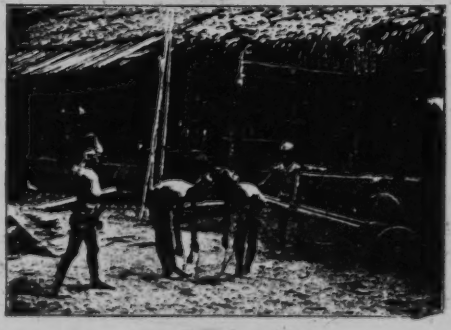
593
858
861
[524]
868
857
858
412

20. TOY CART.

of a savage description. Children have pretty manners; they are respectful to their elders without shyness or cringing.

Children grow up among the implements they will use in after life. Wooden mills for husking rice, tilt-hammers and mortars for pounding, cotton-seeders with geared rollers, spinning-wheels, weaving-looms and other simple machines are in every household; besides agricultural implements, carts and boats, all of which are made or kept in repair by the inmates (*cf.* p. 120). The workshops of artizans of every class are open to view, and the processes are obvious to every passer-by. The interest aroused in children is more diversified than in cold countries with their more secluded life. From mimicking the occupations of adults children learn to take part and soon begin to like a real share in them. Their trade begins with make-believe wares, then come scraps of house and garden produce till it develops into a source of pocket-money and training in business (Nos. 281, 431). The years of tutelage merge into the age of responsibility without abrupt transition. The intelligence which the school-teacher proceeds to build on has insensibly developed under conditions more than commonly favourable, which may help to account for the precocity of Burman school-children under good teaching.

[153]



21. PEG-TOPS (DYIN-PAUK).

871
[524]
876
413

From the ages of eight to ten, boys begin attending the school of the Buddhist monastery (*kyaung*), where they are taught free by the recluse (*pôndyt*) or by his sojourner recluses (*upazin*). The spelling-book is chanted in a chorus led by a senior pupil, and is copied out with a white steatite pencil on a